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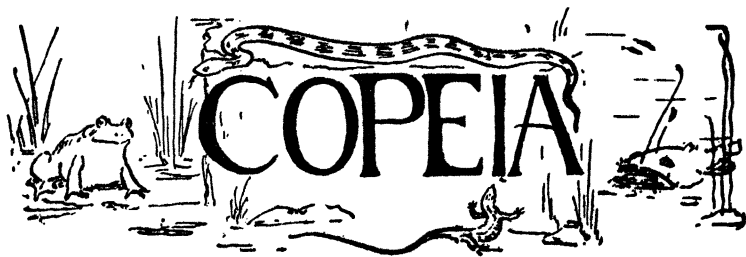
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*Published to advance the Science of cold-blooded vertebrates*

## THE WIDE-MOUTH CATFISH OF THE POTOMAC

Is not the big-headed Wide-mouth Catfish of the Potomac (*Ameiurus lophius* *Cope*) really a valid species?

In my review of the Catfishes in 1877, I found this fish rather plentiful in the Potomac, along with the common Fork-tailed Cat, *Ameiurus catus* (L.), equals *Ameiurus lynx* (Girard). Of this form I found no young examples, none so small as the average of the common species. Moreover, I saw no difference between the two other than the shape of the head. For these reasons I inferred that *A. lophius* was the adult of *A. catus*.

This view, maintained later by Jordan and Evermann, has not yet been questioned by anyone so far as I know.

In 1877, the two Eastern species, *Ameiurus catus* and *A. nebulosus*, were introduced into the Sacramento River, where they have flourished mightily. But among the hundreds of California examples, I have never seen a wide-headed one like the type of *A. lophius*. I have a Catfish before me (on the dinner table) sexually mature at nine inches, with the head precisely that of *A. catus* of the Potomac.

Should not *Ameiurus lophius* be restored to the list of American fishes?

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